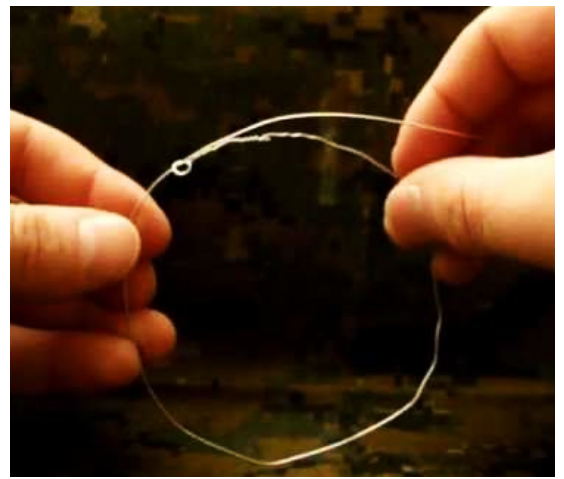
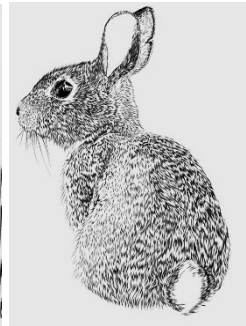
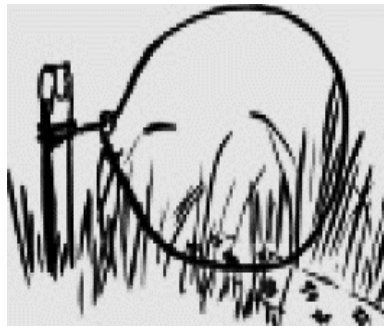


Basic Snares and Trotlines, for Survival Use



A good wire for small game snares is green floral wire. Use for bunnies, squirrels, quail, pheasants, and ducks.

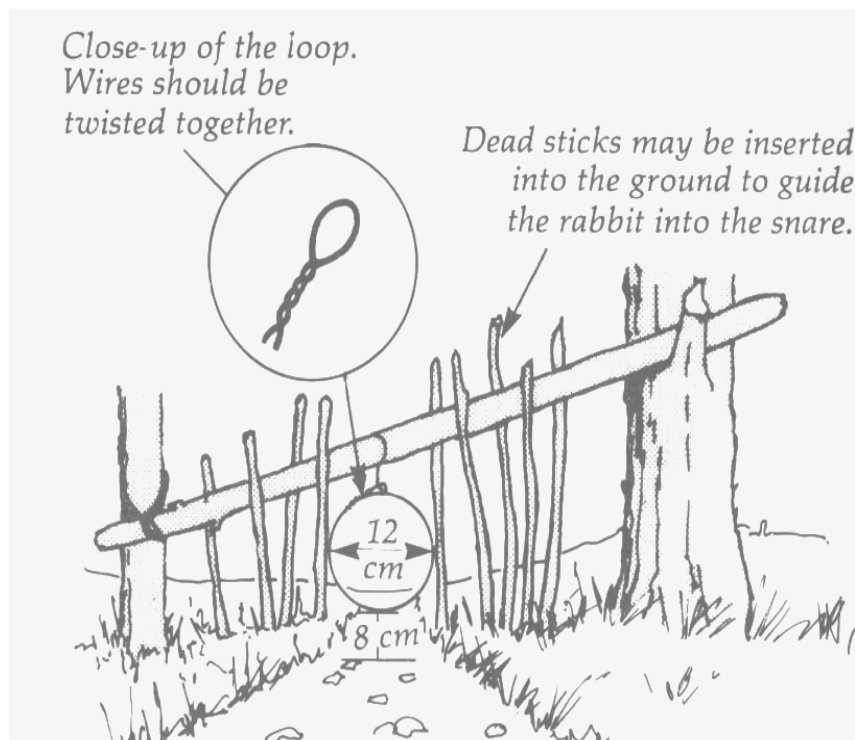


Simple snares made from wire are attached to anchor stakes, and positioned on small game trails.



This is what game trails (made by small game, such as rabbits and pheasants) usually look like.

How to funnel small game, into snare traps:



Snare setup detail, showing how to use brush and sticks to help steer game into your snares.

(This is usually left out of snare diagrams for clarity, but should always be done to improve your odds of catching game.)

You should use even more brush and sticks than shown here, both to guide game into the noose, and also to help disguise the setup.

Always place the noose on an existing game trail, or on a stream “crossing log” (where animals use a fallen log, to avoid having to wade across a small stream.)

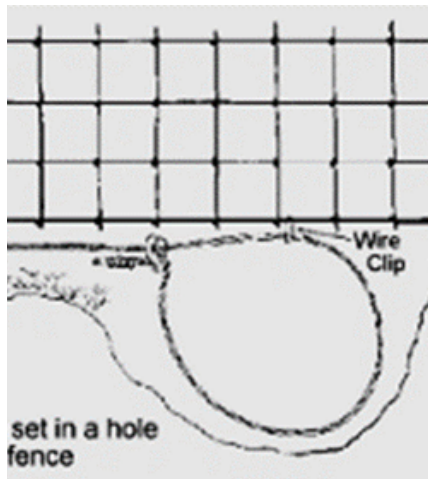
If there are no natural crossing logs, you can always place one on a stream yourself, and animals will use it.

Another excellent place to set snares is at the entrance to any natural shelter, such as a hollow log, or a natural rock overhang. You can also partially block access to the shelter (using rocks or logs), so that game must enter or exit the shelter where your snares are set.

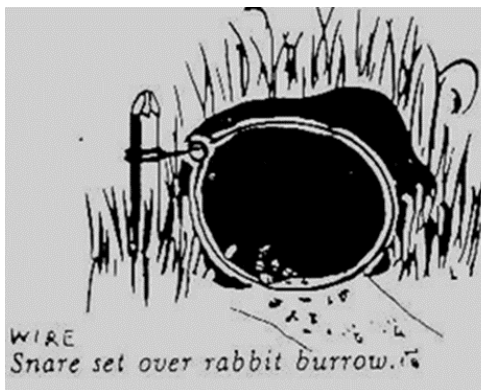
If there are no convenient game shelters where you want to trap, you can make them yourself, and game will start using them. Look for hollow logs that can be cut into short sections and placed where you wish, or use logs or stones to elevate larger flat rocks, to create a shelter, leaving small openings on two sides, for the entrances. Then place your snares in front of the entrances.



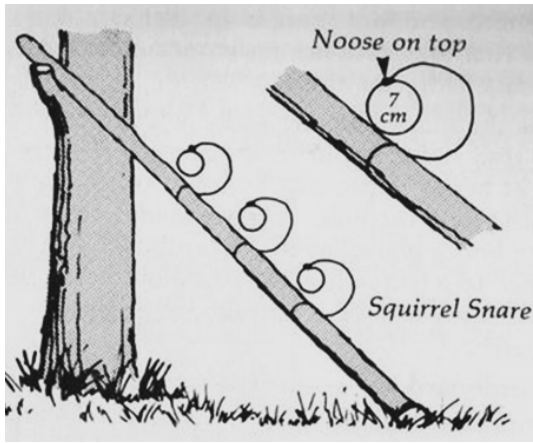
Look for small game trails that cross under a fence, like this example, and set your snare under the fence.



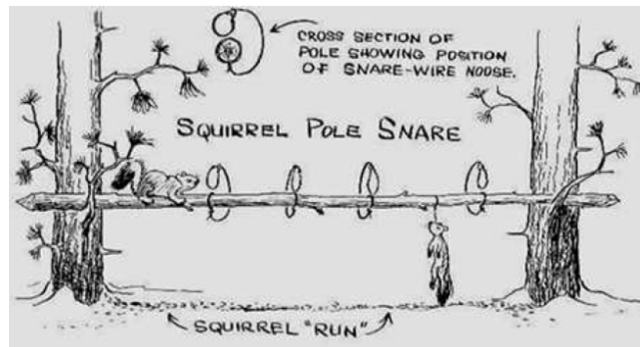
Crossing points under fences are ideal locations for snares, and the snare can also be attached to the fence.



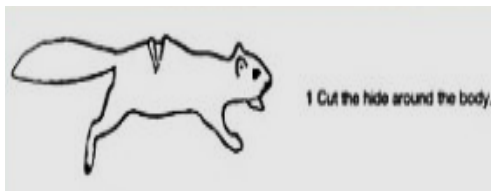
Another excellent location to place a snare is at the entrance to a den, or burrow.



Squirrels can be snared by leaning a pole against a tree as shown here, then adding several fine snares to it. Look for squirrels, and the tiny trails (or runs) they make between trees, and place poles in those locations.

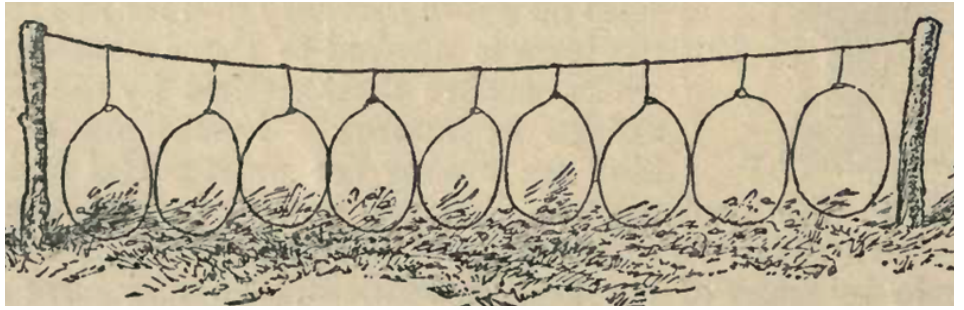


A pole can also be placed between two trees where squirrels are present, and they will be compelled to use it.

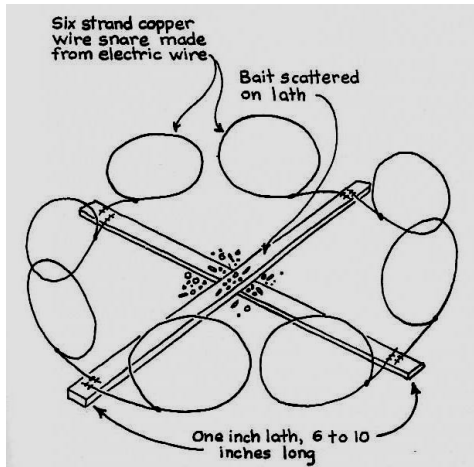


Squirrels are easy to skin, gut, and clean, and the meat is very tender and tasty (it has a slightly nutty flavor).





Quail feed on the ground, so make lines of snares, in places where you see them searching for food.



Another good design. Tie this snare to a stake (or a stone), to keep trapped birds from dragging it away.



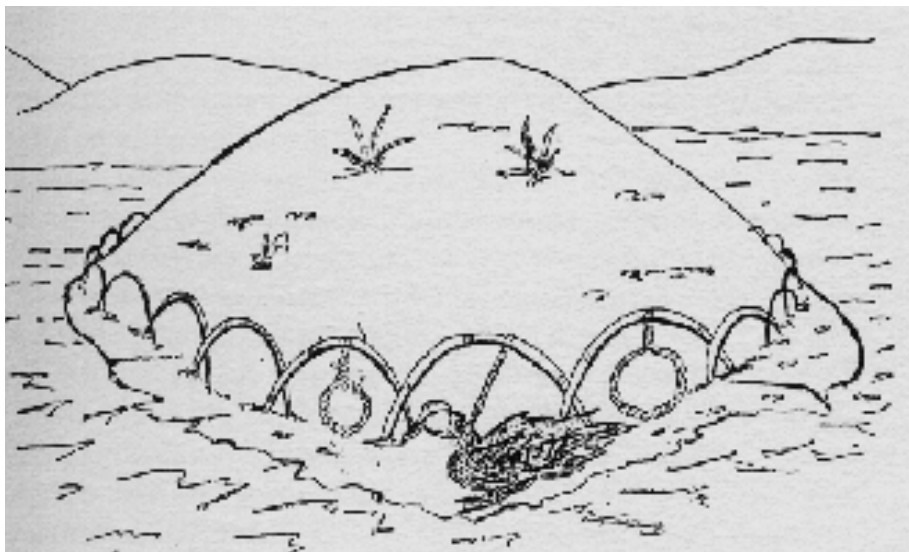
Pheasants also feed on the ground, and can be trapped using the same snares that work for quail.



Place multiple snares at the edges of clearings, in small gaps between plants, where animals enter and exit.



Fishhook Trap, for Ducks: This trap is cruel, but simple and effective. The sketch fully conveys its painful mode of capture, and a shoreline (or beach at low water) is generally a good place to set these. A long stout cord is first stretched across the sand, and secured to a stake at each end. To this cord shorter lines are attached at intervals, each one being supplied with a fish hook baited with a small frog, grasshopper, or minnow, all of which the ducks are very fond of. The main cord and lines are then covered with sand, dirt, or mud, so that only the baits appear on the surface, and the trap is ready for use. This is very similar to a trotline, but used to catch waterfowl. If placed so that it is covered by rising tide waters, you may also catch fish, which will be revealed once the tide recedes (a dual purpose, fish and waterfowl trotline application).

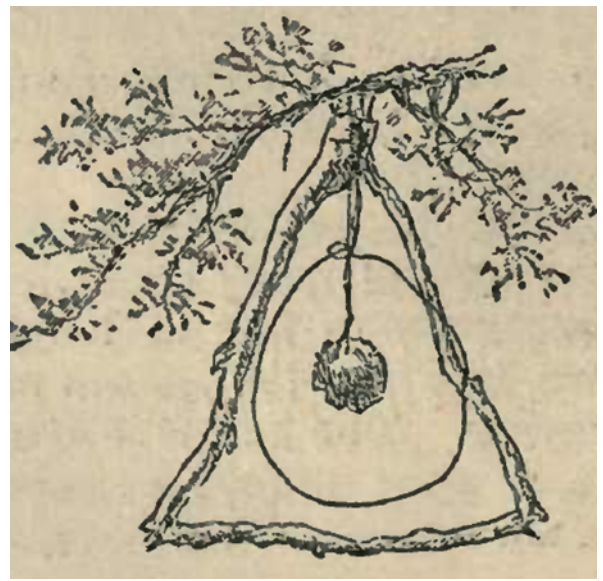
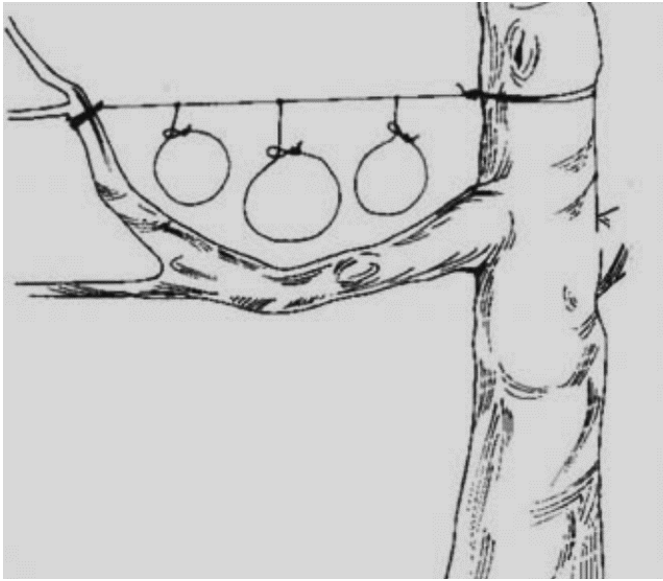


Any small sand bar (or tiny island) in a lake or river where ducks are present, is a good place for snares.

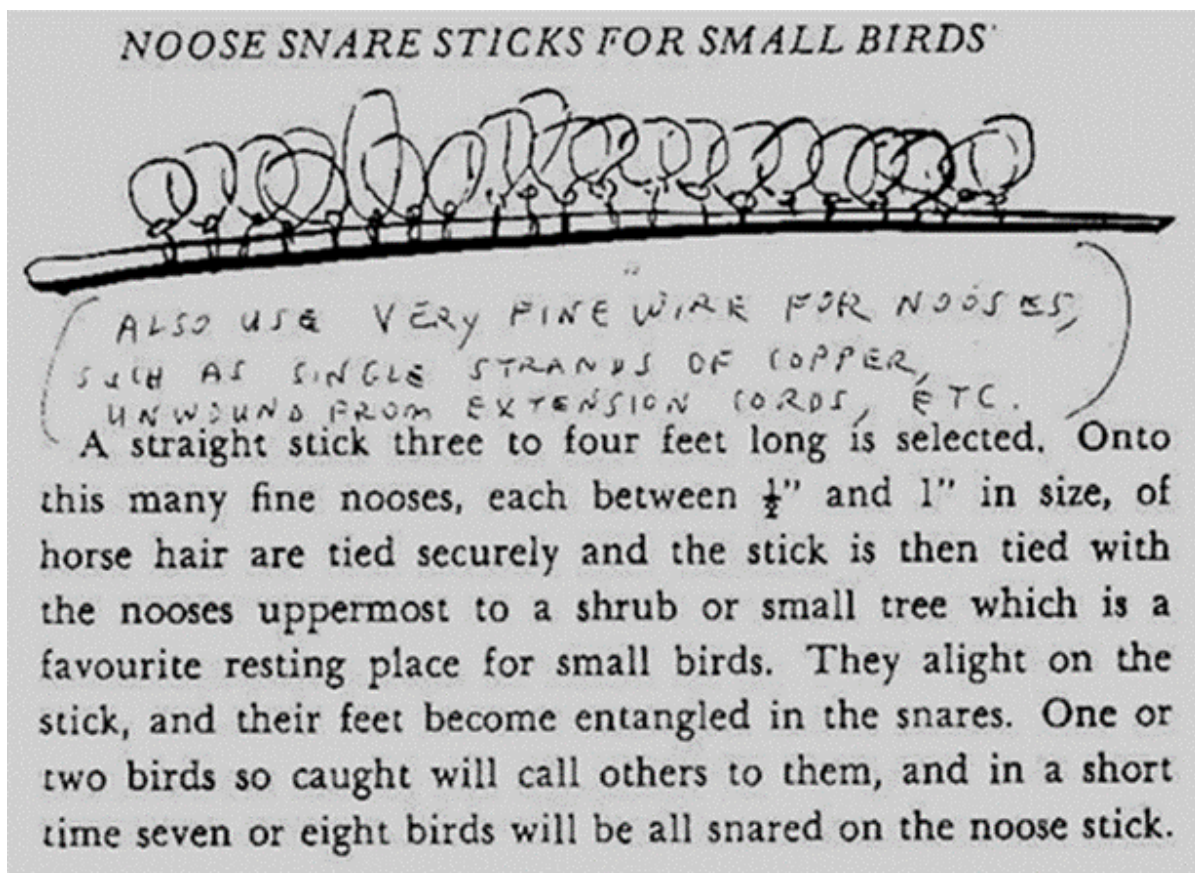
Waterfowl like these resting places, since they are safer from predators.

If the island is small enough you can place snares all around it, as shown here.

And this is an excellent place to construct a game shelter, and then set snares around the shelter.



Birds can be snared in trees, by setting the snares along (or just above) branches where they like to rest. You can also make triangle-shaped roosts from sticks, place a snare and bait inside, and hang from a tree.

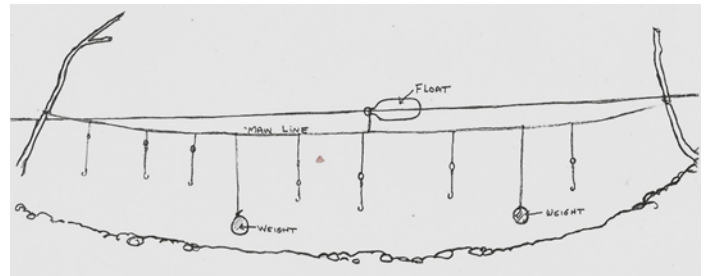
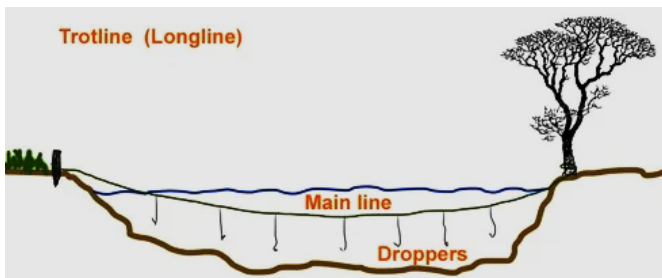


TROT LINES:

A trotline is just a length of sturdy cord that is set in a pond, stream, river, or lake, and secured at both ends.

Then dropper lines are attached at intervals along the cord, with baited hooks at the end of each dropper.

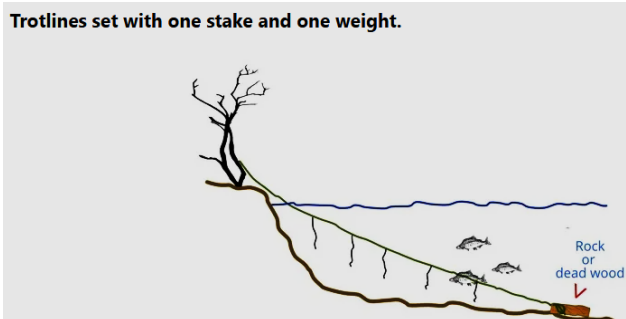
The main line can be kept near the surface with floats, or kept near the bottom with weights, as desired.



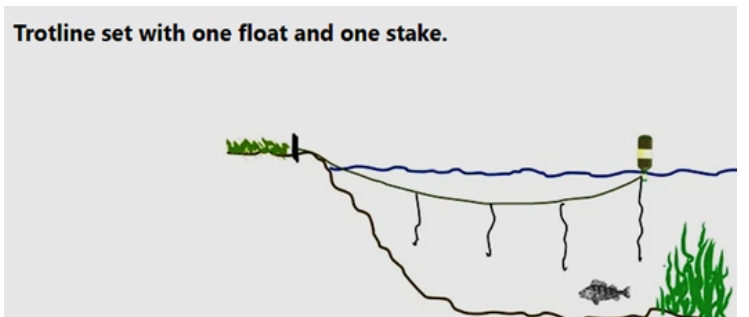
A trotline can be positioned across a small body of water, or parallel to the shoreline, tied to trees or stakes.

There are several variations on trotlines, such as one end tied to a weight, or one end tied to a float, and the float style can be anchored with a weight, or left free-floating.

Trotlines set with one stake and one weight.

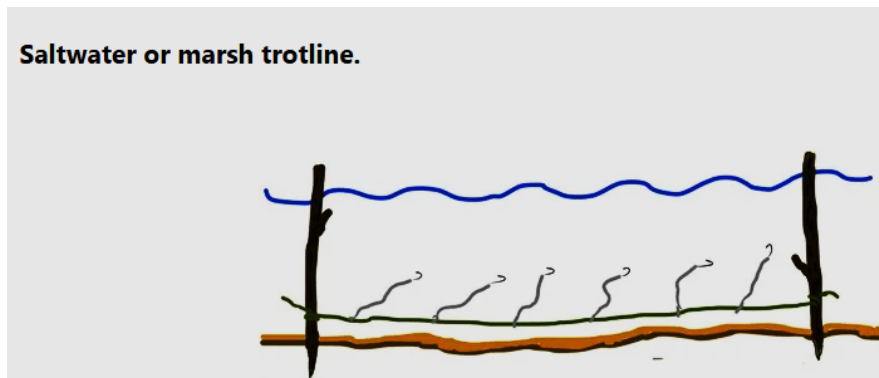


Trotline set with one float and one stake.

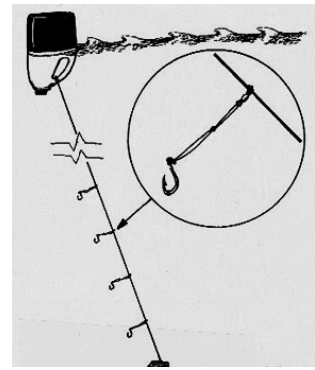
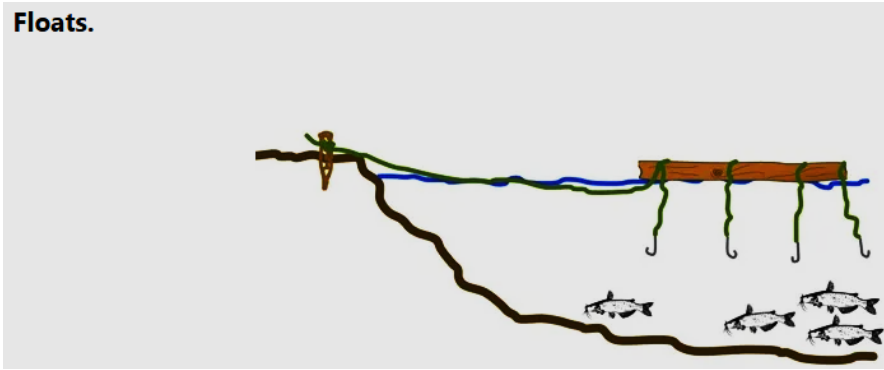


Another style is the saltwater (or marsh) trotline, set where the tide will cover it (like the duck fishhook trap).

Saltwater or marsh trotline.

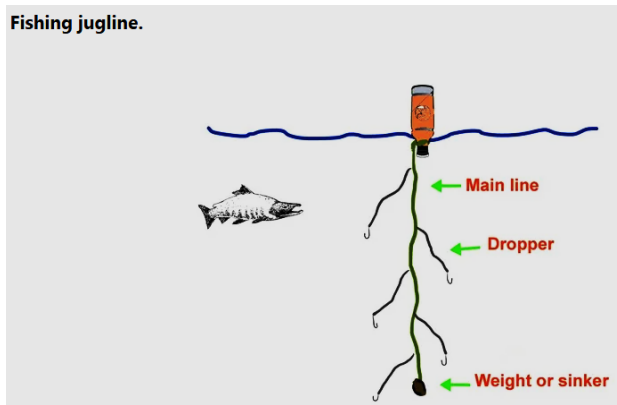


Floats.

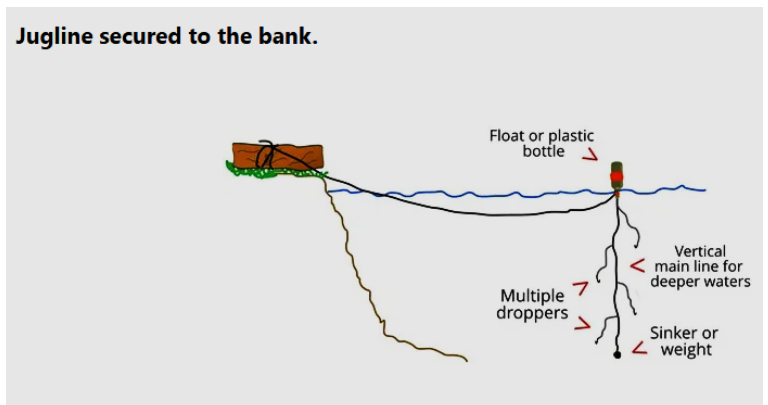


Floats can be made from buoyant logs, bamboo poles (or bundles of poles), or plastic bottles or jugs.

Fishing jugline.

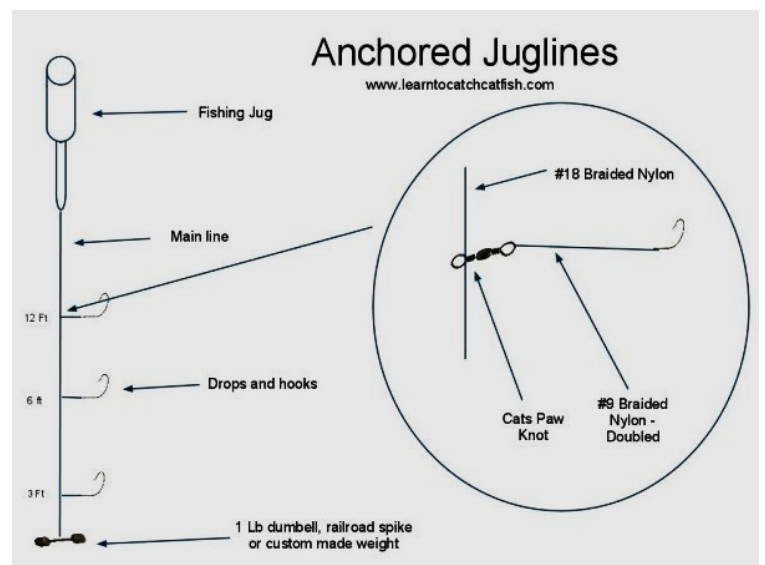
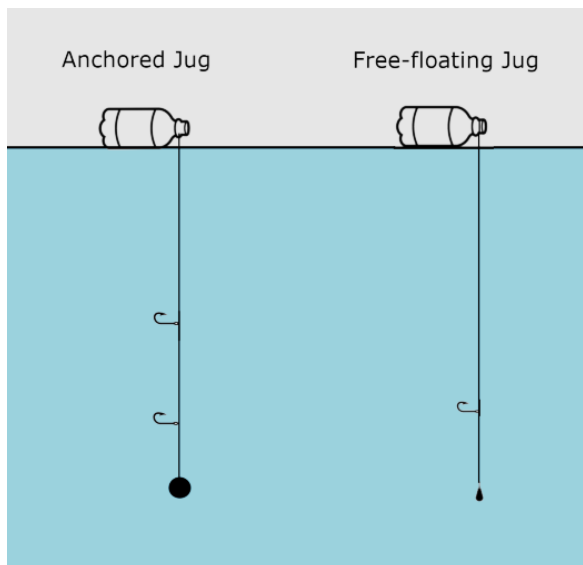


Jugline secured to the bank.

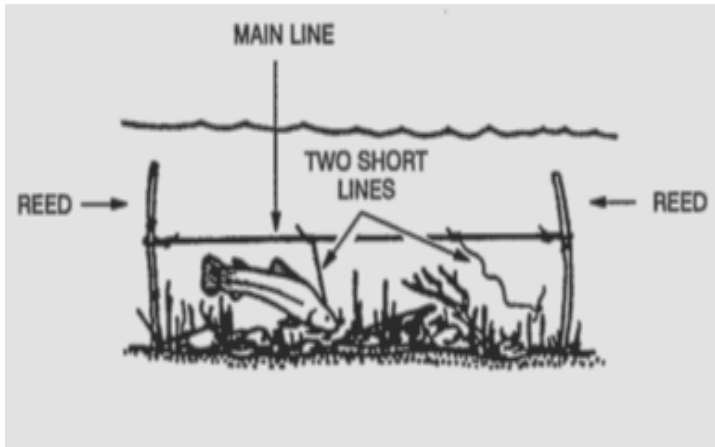


A jugline is just a vertical trotline, supported by a floating jug (or any other float)

Juglines can be allowed to free-float, but I prefer to secure them with an anchor weight, or a tether line.



How to make Hidden Trotlines:



Hidden Trotlines, like this one, are one way to gather food inconspicuously, and Minnow Traps are another.

Trotlines: These are an effective way to gather food, but they have one disadvantage from a long-term survival perspective; anyone who walks along the edge of a pond or stream where a trotline has been placed can see the ends of the main line.

This lets them know that someone is fishing, and it is a simple matter for them to lift your line to see if any fish are on it, and to take them if they want to.

One way to avoid advertising your fishing activity, and to lessen the chances of your catch being stolen, is to use hidden trotlines, like the one in the illustration.

These setups are sometimes called staked lines, because to make one, you run a short main line between two stakes, with two or more hook lines on them.

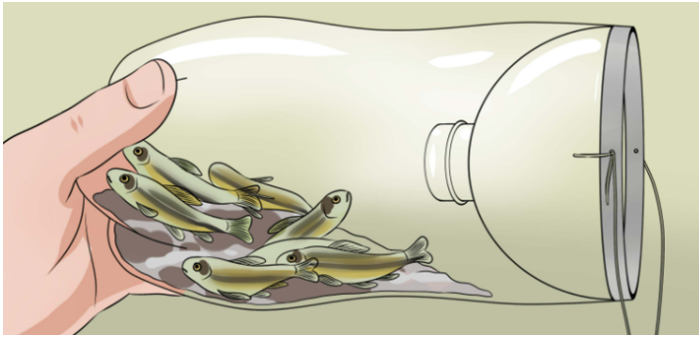
I like these because everything is underwater, where it is hidden from view.

Several of them can be placed around a pond or along a stream, to increase your catch. The disadvantage to these is that you have to wade out to set them, and to check your catch, unless you are working from a boat.

Checking the lines is best done late at night, both to avoid being seen, and because most fish feed in the shallows during the night.

You also have to remember exactly where you placed the set lines, but you can leave a reminder on the bank by each line; something subtle, like a rock or a stick, set in a way that you will recognize, but that won't draw attention.

How to make Minnow Traps:



Minnow Traps: The minnow traps shown here are a good design for collecting minnows for bait, or for use as a survival food source.

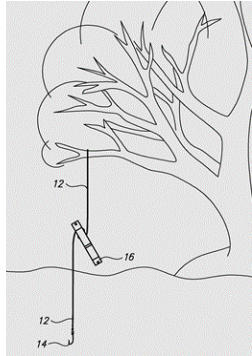
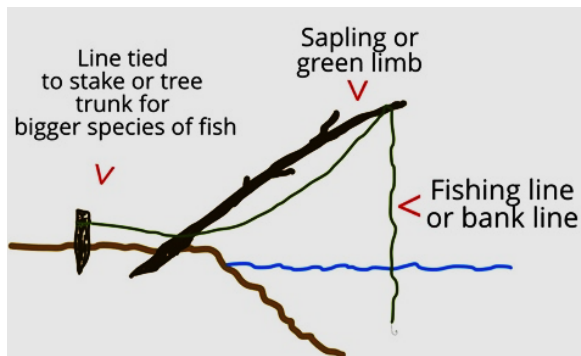
Plastic 2 liter soda bottles make good minnow traps. With these, you cut off the top quarter of the bottle, insert it neck first into the body of the bottle, and staple, wire, or glue it in place. Since the plastic bottle floats, this trap must be weighted, but the weight can be as simple as a small rock tied to the bottom, or a handful of gravel in the bottle. Cut a flap in the side, to use as a door when removing your catch.

Put some bait in the trap, anything from bread or pet food, to dead bugs. Set your trap in a shallow place frequented by minnows, and they will quickly get used to it and swim inside, to get the bait.

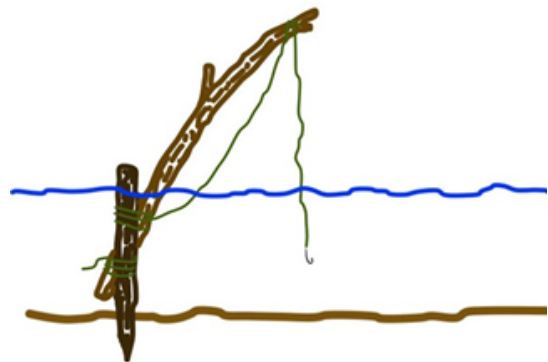
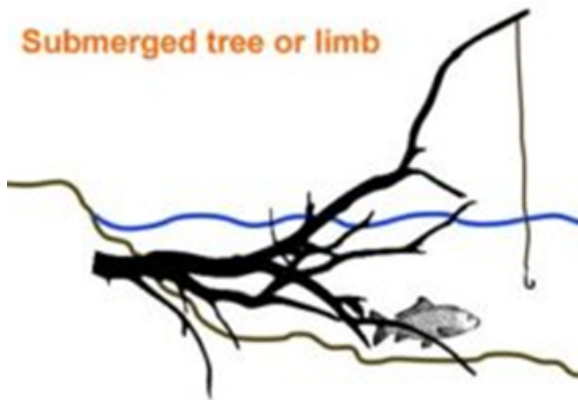


You can also make them from glass jugs and bottles, if you prefer. Use a quart fruit jar, and the neck of a bottle. The bottle neck must be broken off evenly, at a point where its diameter is just big enough to fit tightly into the jar top. A glass bottle may be broken evenly by filing a mark all around it, and then wrapping a fine wire around the scored point. The ends of the wire, extending from the bottle, are heated in a flame or by a candle, and as steel is a good conductor of heat, the wire around the glass will soon get quite hot. When the wire is too hot to touch, plunge the whole thing into a container of cold water, and the break will come just at the right place. You can also wrap the bottle with oil-soaked yarn and set the latter on fire, then when it has burned off and heated the glass, dip it into the water. The screw-on metal jar lid is cut away until only a narrow rim on the threaded part remains. If the neck of the bottle does not fit snugly, wrap it with tape, rubber, or cloth. The picture shows clearly how it is arranged when finished. A turn of wire at each end, with an eye twisted at the top, is used to suspend the trap. If you don't have a bottle to make a funnel from, you can make a funnel shape for the trap from almost anything; plastic, leather, woven twigs, or even netting.

Limb Lines:



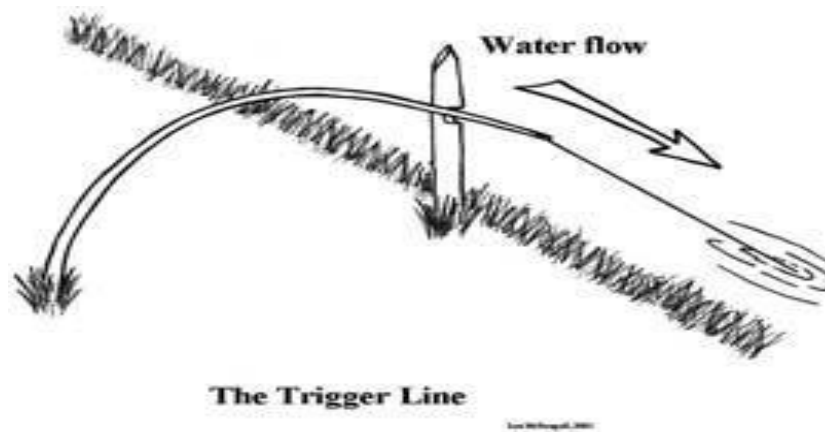
Limb lines are just set lines, that are tied to tree limbs that hang over the water. If there are no overhanging tree limbs where you want to fish, you can make your own by driving a limb into the bank at an angle, so that the end extends out over the water, as shown here. Another variation is to lay a long thin limb across a narrow stream (such as a trout stream), with one or more lines tied to the limb, so that the hooks are in the water. Works best if placed across small pools, where fish like to hang out. You just lift the limb, to gather the fish.



Submerged trees are another good place to set limb lines. If none are present, make your own by tying a limb to a submerged stake.



Trigger Line Fish Trap:



This drawing of a set trigger line shows how simple they are to construct.

The trigger line is one of the simplest and most effective methods of harvesting fish for survival. Part spring snare, part fishing pole, a trigger line automatically sets its hook in a fish's mouth when it takes the bait. Once hooked, the fish remains at the end of the line, alive but securely caught, until retrieved.

The working principles of a trigger line are simple. Required materials for a single set are one fishhook, one or two split-shot sinkers, about ten feet of at least six-pound test monofilament fishing line, a springy green sapling, and a stout wooden stake. Since more sets usually equals more fish, set several at a time.

The stake functions as an anchor for the springy pole, and is best made from dry dead wood because it can be notched more cleanly with a knife than green wood. An ideal candidate will be about ten inches long by two inches in diameter. Sharpen the end that will be pushed into the ground, then cut a sharp-edged notch (see illustration) about halfway through one side, about two inches below the top end. Drive the stake to a depth of at least six inches, into the edge of a streambank. The notch should always point downstream, or away from shore in the case of ponds and lakes, because those are the directions a biting fish will probably pull the bait.

Next rig the pole, which should be made from a springy green sapling at least three feet long and with a base of about one inch. Tie on the line about two inches above the pole's narrow end, attach hook and sinkers, then drive the butt end of the pole firmly into the ground about two feet inshore from the stake. Next, bend the pole downward and wedge it into the stake's notch. The idea is to restrain the pole under tension, but not so securely that it won't slip free with a light tug on the line. Techniques for achieving a perfect fit include slightly flattening the upper side of the pole with a knife, deepening the notch, or angling the anchor stake.

When an ideal fit is achieved, bait the hook with a worm, grasshopper, or even a chunk of meat, and toss it away from shore, ensuring that there is as little slack in the line as possible. Some type of bait is always available where there are fish. Moist logs and rocks along shorelines can be rolled over to reveal earthworms, grubs inhabit rotting stumps, and any insect that can be skewered onto a hook is bait. In winter, freshwater clams often come close to shore, and pieces of their flesh are irresistible to most types of fish. Likewise, the first small fish caught can be cut up to bait several trigger lines, as most fish are cannibalistic.

Good fishing baits are often found in backpacks and daypacks. A raisin on a hook has caught most freshwater species, while bits of summer sausage are great for more carnivorous species, like pike and catfish. Spawning trout have been caught on pieces of colored yarn floated on the surface, while suckers, bullheads, and turtles are attracted to short lengths of shoelace that are saturated with animal fat (bacon grease is best).